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FOR RELEASE SUNDAY, MARCH 28

By Barbara Mittal

Montana's university system is recognized for its educational purposes which result in long-range economic growth. But its immediate economic impact on the state and on the towns in which units are located is often overlooked.

Statistics from Montana State University in Missoula should indicate the similar impact of university units on Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Dillon and Havre.

Employees and students at Montana State University alone make up a group larger than the population of several Montana counties.

The autumn quarter enrollment at MSU reached 5,307 full-time students. Besides the regular school year enrollment, the summer session attracts another 2,050 students to Missoula. About 31 per cent of these summer students are from other states and countries.

It has been estimated that University students have an average monthly spending power of nearly \$50 beyond obligated expenses for school and board and room. At this rate the annual student spending in Missoula is approximately \$2.49 million.

Special schools during the year such as the School for Administrative Leadership and the School for Public Welfare bring 20 to 30 more persons to Missoula for a few days to two months of special study. Annual events for high school students bring large numbers of guests to Missoula for the State Science Fair, Music Festival and Interscholastic. The estimated 1,000 Interscholastic participants and visitors can be expected to spend more than \$20,000 in Missoula during the two-day event.

(more)

There are 665 full-time employees and about 880 part-time employees at MSU. The gross payroll for 1964 was \$5.37 million.

Besides being an employer the University is also a consumer. One of the largest consumers on the MSU campus is the central food service. Last year more than \$340,000 was spent for food alone by the food service. This food is bought on bid through the state purchasing agent.

Although MSU provides housing for students, it accommodates only about 40 per cent of the student population. The other 60 per cent live in private homes and apartments in Missoula and surrounding area.

There are about 800 married students attending MSU. Many of these students have children. Student families living in the 120-unit X apartments on Maurice Avenue include more than 200 children. As more graduate students enroll at MSU the number of married students increases. The MSU Family Housing Office has received several requests for multi-bedroom apartments already for the next school year. About two-thirds of the married students will find housing off-campus.

Another indicator of spending by University students is the automobile registration at MSU. Of the 4,900 automobiles registered, 3,923 of them are driven by students.

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